

REMARKS

The drawings have been objected to as not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Please note that the drawings have been amended to obviate this objection and no new matter has been entered.

Claims 1-5, and 8-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2003/0128538A1 to Shinohara et al. in view of Japanese Publication No. 2003-036706 to Hideo.

The examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

The applicant's claims are directed to an illuminated device including illumination means having at least one illumination plate. The plate or plates each include at least one face and at least one edge along with at least one light source adapted to deliver light into the illumination plate via the edge. Diffusion means comprise a cover having inner and outer surfaces. The plate is a forward-diffusing acrylic material from the surface of which light emerges predominately at an angle of less than 30° from the plane of the surface at the point of emergence. The inner surface of the cover is disposed to overlies the face or to form an enclosure in which the face is disposed.

On the other hand, Shinohara '538 includes a light conductor plate 2 which is a transparent resin having a higher refractive index such as a polycarbonate resin or a methacrylic resin. Neither of these materials is a forward-diffusing acrylic but is in fact a clear material containing a small percentage of particles of another clear material having a different

refractive index, which can be determined from the description of how light performs within the material. The '538 reference is concerned with preferential directivity of light when applied, for example, to liquid crystal displays. The application makes references to the need to ensure that light is emitted within an angle 30° with respect to a direction perpendicular to the light emitting surface. Thus, is completely different from the present application which ensures that light emerges predominantly at an angle of less than 30° from the plane of the surface at the point of emergence. The two concepts are opposite to one another, the present invention using a forward-diffusing acrylic material from which light is emitted a shallow angle whereas the material of Shinohara emits light at a very steep angle more than 60° from the plane of the surface at the point of emergence. Thus, Shinohara does not incorporate the same kind of material as defined by the applicant's invention and the light emitted is at a completely different angle from that as defined in the present application.

The examiner has stated that Hideo teaches the advantages of using a diffusion cover. Even if this is true, the combination of Hideo and Shinohara, does not render the applicant's invention as obvious as the combination of references does not include a forward-diffusing acrylic material nor does having the light emerge predominantly at an angle of less than 30° from the plane of the surface at the point of emergence.

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that the claims, and the claims dependent there from are in proper form. The applicant respectfully contends that Shinohara et al., U.S. Publication No. 2003/0128538A1, and Hideo, Japanese Publication No. 2003-036706 do not

anticipate the claimed invention under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Thus, claims 1-5, and 8-12 are considered to be patently distinguishable over the prior art of record.

The application is now considered to be in condition for allowance, and an early indication of same is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Arlene J. Powers', is written over a horizontal line.

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IN THE DRAWINGS

Please amend Figure 2 as indicated on the attached page.